Numb. 89

The TATLER.

By *Isaac Bickerstaff* Esq;

Rura mihi placeant, riguiq; in Vallibus Amnes,
Flumina Amem Sylvasq; inglorius ---

From *Tuesday November* 1. to *Thursday November* 3. 1709.

Grecian Coffee-house, November 2.

I have receiv'd this short Epistle from an unknown Hand.

SIR,

'I HAVE no more to trouble you with, than to desire you would in your next help me to some Answer to the Inclos'd concerning your self. In the mean time 'I congratulate you upon the Increase of your 'Fame, which you see has extended it self beyond 'the Bills of Mortality.

SIR,

'THAT the Country is barren of News, has been the Excuse Time out of Mind for dropping a Correspondence with our Friends in *London*; as if it were impossible out of a Coffee-house to write an agreeable Letter. I am too ingenuous to endeavour at the covering of my Negligence with so common an Excuse. Doubtless, amongst Friends bred as we have been, to the Knowledge of Books as well as Men, a Letter dated from a Garden, a Grotto, a Fountain, a Wood, a Meadow, or the Banks of a River, may be more entertaining, than one from *Tom's*, *Will's*, *White's*, or St. *James's*. I promise therefore to be frequent for the future in my rural Dates to you: But for fear you should, from what I have said, be induc'd to believe I shun the Commerce of Men, I must inform you, That there is a fresh Topick of Discourse lately risen amongst the Ingenious in our Part of the World, and is become the more fashionable for the Ladies giving into it. This we owe to *Isaac Bickerstaff*, who is very much censur'd by some, and as much justify'd by others. Some criticise his Style, his Humour and his Matter; others admire the whole Man: Some pretend, from the Informations of their Friends in Town, to decipher the Author; and others confess they are lost in their Guesses. For my Part, I must own my self a profess'd Admirer of the Paper, and desire you to send me a compleat Set, together with your Thoughts of the Squire, and his Lucubrations.

There is no Pleasure like that of receiving Praise from the Praise-worthy; and I own it a very solid Happiness, that these my Lucubrations are approv'd by a Person of so fine a Taste as the Author of this Letter, who is capable of enjoying the World in the Simplicity of its natural Beauties. This Pastoral Letter, if I may so call it, must be written by a Man who carries his Entertainment wherever he goes, and is undoubtedly one of those happy Men who appear far otherwise to the Vulgar. I dare say, he is not envied by the Vicious, the Vain, the Frolick, and the Loud; but is continually bless'd with that strong and serious Delight which flows from a well taught and liberal Mind. With great Respect to Country Sports, I may say, this Gentleman could pass his Time agreeably, if there were not a Hare or a Fox in his County. That calm and elegant Satisfaction which the Vulgar call Melancholy, is the true and proper Delight of Men of Knowledge and Virtue. What we take for Diversion, which is a kind of forgetting our selves, is but a mean Way of Entertainment, in Comparison of that which is considering, knowing and enjoying our selves. The Pleasures of ordinary People are in their Passions; but the Seat of this Delight is in the Reason and Understanding. Such a Frame of Mind raises that sweet Enthusiasm which warms the Imagination at the Sight of every Work of Nature, and turns all around you into Picture and Landskip. I shall be ever proud of Advices from this Gentleman; for I profess writing News from the learned as well as the busie World.

As for my Labours, which he is pleas'd to enquire after, if they can but wear one Impertinence out of human Life, destroy a single Vice, or give a Morning's Chearfulness to an honest Mind: In short, if the World can be but one Virtue the better, or in any Degree less vicious, or receive from them the smallest Addition to their innocent Diversions, I shall not think my Pains, or indeed my Life, to have been spent in vain.

Thus far as to my Studies. It will be expected I should in the next Place give some Account of my Life. I shall therefore, for the Satisfaction of the petient Age, and the Benefit of Posterity, present the World with the following Abridgment of it.

It is remarkable, that I was bred by Hand, and eat nothing but Milk till I was a Twelvemonth old; from which Time, to the 8th Year of my Age, I was observ'd to delight in Pudding and Potatoes; and indeed I retain a Benevolence for that Sort of Food to this Day. I do not remember that I distinguish'd my self in any Thing at those Years, but by my great Skill at Taw, for which I was so barbarously us'd, that it has ever since given me an Aversion to Gaming. In my Twelfth Year, I suffer'd very much for Two or Three false Concords. At Fifteen, I was sent to the University, and stay'd there for some Time; but a Drum passing by, (being a Lover of Musick) I listed my self for a Soldier. As Years came on, I began to examine Things, and grew discontented at the Times. This made me quit the Sword, and take to the Study of the Occult Sciences, in which I was so wrap'd up, that *Oliver Cromwell* had been buried, and taken up again, Five Years before I heard he was dead. This gave me first the Reputation of a Conjurer, which has been of great Disadvantage to me ever since, and

kept

kept me out of all Publick Employments. The greater Part of my later Years has been divided between *Dick*'s Coffee-house, the *Trumpet* in *Shoe-Lane*, and my own Lodgings.

From my own Apartment, November 2.

The Evil of unseasonable Visits has been complain'd of to me with much Vehemence by Persons of both Sexes; and I am desir'd to consider this very important Circumstance, that Men may know how to regulate their Conduct in an Affair which concerns no less than Life it self. For to a rational Creature, it is almost the same Cruelty to attack his Life, by robbing him of so many Moments of his Time, or so many Drops of his Blood. The Author of the following Letter, has a just Delicacy in this Point, and put it into a very good Light.

Mr. *Bickerstaff*, *Octob.* 29.

'I AM very much afflicted with the Gravel, which makes me sick and peevish. I desire to know of you, if it be reasonable that any of my Acquaintance should take Advantage over me at this Time, and attack me with long Visits, because they are idle, and I am confin'd. Pray Sir, reform the Town in this Matter. Men never consider whether the sick Person be dispos'd for Company, but make their Visits to humour themselves. You may talk upon this Topick, to as to oblige all Persons afflicted with Chronical Distempers, among which I reckon Visits. Don't think me a sowr Man, for I love Conversation and my Friends; but I think one's most intimate Friend may be too familiar; and, that there are such Things as unseasonable Wit, and painful Mirth.

It is with some so hard a Thing to employ their Time, that it is a great good Fortune when they have a Friend indispos'd, that they may be punctual in perplexing him, when he is recover'd enough to be in that State which cannot be call'd Sickness or Health; when he is too well to deny Company, and too ill to receive 'em. It is no uncommon Case, if a Man is of any Figure or Power in the World, to be congratulated into a Relapse.

Will's Coffee-house, November 2.

I was very well pleas'd this Evening, to hear a Gentleman expres a very becoming Indignation against a Practice which I my self have been very much offended at. There is nothing (said he) more ridiculous, than for an Actor to insert Words of his own in the Part he is to act, so that it is impossible to see the Poet for the Player. You'l have *Pinkethman* and *Bullock* helping out *Beaumont* and *Fletcher*. It puts me in Mind (continu'd he) of a Collection of antique Statues which I once saw in a Gentleman's Possession, who employ'd a neighbouring Stone-Cutter to add Noses, Ears, Arms, or Legs, to the main'd Works of *Phidias* or *Praxiteles*. You may be sure this Addition disfigur'd the Statues much more than Time had. I remember a *Venus*, that by the Nose he had given her, took like Mother *Shipton*; and a *Mercury*, with a Pair of Legs that seem'd very much swell'd with a Dropsy.

I thought the Gentleman's Observations very proper; and he told me, I had improv'd his Thought, in mentioning on this Occasion those wise Commentators who had fill'd up the Hemistichs of *Virgil*; particularly that notable Poet, who, to make the *Æneid* more perfect, carry'd on the Story to *Lavinia*'s Wedding. If the proper Officer will not condescend to take Notice of these Absurdities, I shall my self, as a Censor of the People, animadvert upon such Proceedings.

Advertisements.

JUst Publish'd,

*** The Committee: Or, The Faithful Irishman. A Comedy. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal, by Her Majesty's Servants. Written by the Honourable Sir Robert Howard. Printed for M. Hawkins at the Angel in St. Paul's Church-yard. Pr. 1 s.

TWenty four new Country Dances for the Year 1710. With proper Tunes, and new Figures or Directions to each Dance: Compos'd by Mr. Kynaston. All fairly Engraven. Pr. 6 d. Note, The new Country Dancing-Master is publish'd, containing the Country Dances for the Three last Years. Printed for J. Walsh, Servant in Ordinary to her Majesty, and P. Randall, at the Harp and Hautboy in Katherine-street near Somerset-House in the Strand, and J. Hare at the Viol and Flute in Cornhill near the Royal-Exchange.

*** The famous Medicine for curing the Cholick, that has for some Time been sold by Mr. Rogers, Bookseller in Fleet-street, at 2 s. and 6 d. the Paper, has lately cur'd a Gentlewoman near Tunbridge of above 70 Years old, who had been afflicted with that Distemper at Times for above 40 Years, and for above half a Year last past had it without any Intermission, as appears by a Letter from a Friend of the Gentlewoman's sent to Mr. Rogers, dated July 9. 1709. which is to be seen at his Shop by any one that desires it.

*** The Statutes at large, in Three Volumes; Wingate and Washington's Abridgments, with a supplement to them; Mr. Clutterbuck's Plain and Rational Vindication and Explanation of the Liturgy; Dr. Gibson on the Sacrament, at 1 l. 5 s. per Hundred; Winchester Manual; Bibles and Common Prayers of all Sorts, ruled or wanting; a fine Set of Cuts for the Common Prayer, engraved by Mr. Sturt; Dr. Nicolls's Paraphrase on the Common Prayer; the New Welch Common Prayer and Psalms, with or without Cuts; and Tate and Brady's Psalms, with the New Supplement; Bishop Beveridge's Catechism; Dr. Williams's Catechism; are sold by R. Whitledge, the Bible and Ball in Ave-Mary-lane near Ludgate, at the lowest Prices.

This Day is publish'd,

*** An Exposition of the 39 Articles of the Church of England. Whole the Birth to the Right Reverend Father in God W. Beveridge, D. D. late Lord Bishop of St. Asaph. Printed from his Original Manuscript. Since it hath by some been questioned, Whether the Rr. Rev. Author of this Exposition did design it should be publish'd or not; and whether the Publication of it would be for his Honour, and for the Common Good? Therefore this Exposition of the Fifth Article is first printed singly, and by Way of Specimen, that the Learned may from hence be able to form a Judgment of the whole Work; and that the remaining Part may be either speedily publish'd, or totally suppress'd, according as the Publication or Suppression of it shall be thought most for the Honour of the Author, and the Benefit of the Publick. Oxford, Printed at the Theatre; and are to be sold by R. Smith, at his Warehouse in Exeter-Change in the Strand, London. Price 2 s. small Paper, and 2 s. 6 d. large. of new

*** A Supplement to the New Version of Psalms, by Dr. Brady and Mr. Tate; containing the Psalms in particular Measures; the usual Hymns, Creed, Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, Holy Sacrament, &c. with Gloria Patri's, and Tunes Treble and Bass proper to each of them, and all the rest of the Psalms. The fifth Edition, Corrected, and much enlarged; With the Addition of Plain Instructions for all those who are desirous to learn or improve themselves in Psalmody; near 30 new Tunes, composed by several of the best Masters; and a Table of Psalms suited to the Feasts and Fasts of the Church, &c. With Tables of all the Psalms of the New, Old, and Dr. Patrick's Versions, directing what Tunes are fitted for each Psalm. The Whole being a Compleat Psalmody. Useful for Teachers and Learners of either Version. Printed, and Sold by James Holland, at the Bible and Ball, at the West-End of St. Paul's.

A Plain and Rational Vindication and Explanation of the Liturgy of the Church of England. Collected out of the Discourses of some of the Reverend Bishops and Doctors of that Church, by Way of Question and Answer. With a short Explanation of the Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments. By J. Clutterbuck, Gent. The Fourth Edition, with large Improvements. Printed in a Volume convenient to bind with the Common Prayer, proper for Schools, and may be acceptable to many of Riper Years. Sold by R. Whitledge in Ave-Mary-Lane, and J. Morphew, near Stationers-Hall. 1709. Price 6 d. or 100 for 45 s. to such as are Charitably disposed.

*** A New Set of Cuts for the Common Prayer, 55 in Number, far exceeding any done in Great Britain before. Engraven by J. Sturt: And Sold by him in Golden-Lion-Court, Aldersgate-street; R. Whitledge in Ave-Mary-Lane; J. Morphew, and J. Hazard, near Stationers-Hall. Pr. 5 s.

*** A Military Dictionary: Explaining all difficult Terms in Martial Discipline, Fortification, and Gunnery. The Third Edition, improv'd. To which is likewise added, a Sea Dictionary, of all the Terms of Navigation. Both of them very useful to all Persons that read the Publick News, or serve in the Army, Navy, or Militia; for the Understanding the Accounts of Sieges, Battles, and other Warlike and Marine Expedition, which daily occurr in this Time of Action. By Officers who serv'd several Years at Sea and Land. Printed, and sold by J. Morphew, near Stationers-Hall. Price 1, s. 6 d.

Sold by *John Morphew* near *Stationers-Hall*; where *Advertisements* are taken in.